



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 18, 2006

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
HERBERT HADAD, MEGAN GAFFNEY
HEATHER TASKER, BRIDGET KELLY
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

U.S. INDICTS NYPD OFFICER AND TWO OTHERS
IN COCAINE AND ROBBERY RING

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and MARK J. MERSHON, the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced today that KIRSIX DE LA CRUZ, LUIS GERMAN, a/k/a "Pedro," and MARKUS VIZANIARIS, a/k/a "White Grande," have been charged with participating in a conspiracy to steal cocaine from drug stash houses in Manhattan, and to share the proceeds of those robberies. DE LA CRUZ has been an NYPD officer since 1995, and, at the time of the alleged crimes, DE LA CRUZ had registered to take the NYPD sergeant's examination.

According to a Complaint unsealed previously in Manhattan federal court, in July 2005, DE LA CRUZ introduced a co-conspirator not named in the Complaint ("CC-1") to GERMAN because GERMAN knew the locations of drug stash houses around Manhattan, and was willing to share that information with DE LA CRUZ and CC-1. DE LA CRUZ, GERMAN, and CC-1 agreed that CC-1 would rob the drug stash houses identified by GERMAN, and CC-1 would then share the proceeds of the robberies with DE LA CRUZ and GERMAN.

According to the Complaint, on July 13, 2005, the FBI arrested CC-1 while he was in possession of a backpack containing approximately six kilograms of cocaine - worth over \$100,000 - and a loaded gun. The cocaine had been stolen by VIZANIARIS and CC-1 from an apartment identified by GERMAN as a drug stash location.

On May 18, 2006, a grand jury returned an Indictment charging DE LA CRUZ, GERMAN, and VIZANIARIS with conspiracy to distribute cocaine and conspiracy to commit robbery. All three defendants have been arrested.

If convicted of the charges, each defendant faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the FBI and the Internal Affairs Bureau of the New York Police Department, and said that the investigation is continuing.

Assistant United States Attorneys ELIE HONIG and MICHAEL Q. ENGLISH are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

06-074

###